

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

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AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

USMISSION GENEVA

USEC BRUSSELS

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ATTENTION: ARA/LA/MRSD

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, PINT, ELAOCN ICFTU

SUBJECT: ORIT EXDCUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

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REF: MEXICO 12759

SUMMARY: SUBJECT SESSION COMPLETED ON OCT. 22 IN GENERAL AMBIENCE DESCRIBED AS "FRANK BUT GENTLEMANLY." TWO MAJOR RESOLUTIONS ADVANCED THE DATE OF NEXT REGULAR ORIT CONGRESS FROM CONSTITUTIONALLY REQUIRED JANUARY 1978 TO APRIL 1977 SCHEDULE FOR MEXICO CITY, AND NAMED COMMITTEE OF ONE COLOMBIAN, ONE AFL-CIO AND LATER TO BE NAMED ICFTU MEMBER TO REVISE ORIT CONSTITUTION. MAJOR STUBMLING BLOCK OF LATTER FUNCTION MAY BE FINDING WASY FOR AFL-CIO TO REMAIN AFFILIATED TO ORIT WHILE NOT A MEMBER OF PARENT ICFTU(IN CONFLICT WITH ICFTU'S CONSTITUTION). ICFTU DELEGATE VANDERVEKEN DEMONSTRATED CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE ON ICFTU'S SUPPORT OF CHILEAN CUT EXILES WITH AVOWAL THAT LATTER'S FUNDING NOW COMING PRINCIPALLY FROM SCANDINAVIANS. HIS PERFORMANCE LED TWO ORIT PRINCIPALS TO DDUCE THAT ICFTU MAY BE MODERATING ITS LATIN AMERICAN-AFL-CIO STANCE. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO TWO TOP OFFICIALS OF ORIT OCT. 22 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING WAS CONDUCTED IN FRANK BUT GENTLEMANLY AMBIENCE. BELGIAN JOHN VANDERVEKEN, ASST. GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE ICFTU WHO REPRESENTED GEN. SEC. OTTO KERSTEN, DISPLAYED FEW OF THE ANIMOSITIES TYPICAL OF HIS ORGANIZATION OVER PAST FEW YEARS, AND REPEATEDLY AVOWED ICFTU'S MAJOR CONCERN WAS TO "STENGTHEN ORIT."

2. TWO MAJOR RESOLUTIONS WERE APPROVED. THE REGULAR 9TH CONGRESS, CONSTITUTIONALLY REQUIRED BY JANUARY 1978 WILL BE ADVANCED TO APRIL 1977 AND HELD IN MEXICO CITY. THIS MOVE ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR A SPECIAL OR EXTRAODINARIO CONGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION FOR SOME TIME. PREPARATIONS FOR THE APRIL 1977 CONGRESS WERE LEFT IN THE HANDS OF S/G JULIO ETCHEVERRY, TREAS. ESTRADA AND PRESIDENT RAFAEL CAMACHO GUZMAN(OF THE MEXICAN CTM).

3. A COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF COLOMBIAN TULIO CUEVAS, AFL-CIO WILLIAM MCGUIRE, AND A THIRD PERSON SHORTLY TO BE DESIGNATED BY THE ICFTU, WAS CREATED TO MAKE NECESSARY REVISIONS TO THE ORIT CONSTITUON. THIS COMMITTEE WILL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OSTENSIBLY TACKLE THE KNOTTY PROBLEM OF LEGITIMIZING CONTINUED AFL-CIO AFFILIATION TO ORIT WHILE IT IS NOT AFFILIATED TO THE PARENT ICFTU. (THIS SITUATION IS APPARENTLY IN CONFLICT WITH THE ICFTU CONSTITUTION RATHER THAN THAT OF ORIT. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN HOW THE SITUATION CAN BE RESOLVED THROUGH CHANGES TO THE LATTER'S CONSTITUTION).

4. THERE WAS NO OPEN DISCUSSION ON RENEWAL OF ICFTU FUNDING OR ORIT BUT VANDERVEKEN LEFT THE IMPESSION THAT ONCE ORIT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY RESTRUCTURED, FUNDING OF THE ORGANIZATION WOULD BE RESUMED. PARTICIPATION OF THE AFL-CIO DID NOT APPEAR TO BE THE ISSUE IT HAS BEEN IN THE RECENT PAST. IT SEEMED APPARENT HOWEVER THAT THE ICFTU WOULD LIKE TO SEE A NEW GENERAL SECRETARY IN PLACE OF ETCHEVERRY.

5. BOTH ORIT OFFICERS DESCRIBED VANDERVEKEN'S ATTITUDE AS CONCILIATORY TOWARD AFL-CIO AND SOMEWHAT CHANGED IN REGARD TO CHILEAN CUT EXILE GROUP WHICH ICFTU HAD EMBRACED FOR SEVERAL YEARS. HE RECEIVED THE STRONGEST CRITICISM OF THE SESSION ON ICFTU SUPPORT OF THESE EXILES, MANY OF WHOM ARE WORKING CLOSELY WITH COMMUNIST AND ULTRA-LEFT SOCIALIST UNION MOVEMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA. VANDERVEKEN CLAIMED ICFTU HAD REDUCED OR ELIMINATED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE EXILES BUT SOME MONEY WAS STILL COMING FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN AFFILIATES.

6. COMMENT: REPORTS FROM THIS MEETING REINFORCE OTHERS THAT THE ICFTU MIGHT HAVE LEARNED SOMETHING OF A LESSON ABOUT THIS HEMISPHERE SINCE THE LAST ICFTU CONGRESS. VANDERVEKEN'S WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS AND COMPROMISE ISSUES THAT RAISED HACLES IN THE RECENT PAST, SIGNALS SOME POSSIBLE MODERATION OF ICFTU LATIN POLICY. THE CLEAR MESSAGE FROM THE MAJORITY OF THE LATIN DELEGATES AT THE LAST ICFTU CONGRESS THAT THEY INTEND TO MAKE ORIT DECISIONS; THE BURN TISSUE PRODUCED BY THEIR SUPPORT OF THE EXILE CHILEAN MARXISTS; AND, THE DISPLAYED RESOLVE OF LATINS AND THE AFL-CIO TO GO IT ALONE WHEN NECESSARY, ARE HAVING THEIR COMBINED EFFECT.
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